



**SPECIAL MEETING OF THE COMMON COUNCIL
MIDDLETOWN CONNECTICUT
FEBRUARY 1, 2016**

The Special meeting Questions to Directors of the Common Council of the City of Middletown was held in the Council Chamber of the Municipal Building on Monday, February 1, 2016 at 6 p.m.

Present

Deputy Mayor Robert P. Santangelo, Councilman Eugene Nocera, Councilman Thomas J. Serra, Councilwoman Mary A. Bartolotta, Councilman Gerald E. Daley, , Councilman Carl R. Chisem, Councilman Robert Blanchard, Councilman Sebastian N. Giuliano, Councilman Philip J. Pessina, Councilwoman Deborah A. Kleckowski, and Councilwoman Linda Salafia; Common Council Clerk Marie O. Norwood.

Absent

Mayor Daniel T. Drew, Corporation Counsel Daniel B. Ryan, and Councilman Grady L. Faulkner, Jr.

1. Mayor calls meeting to order at 6 p.m.

The acting chair calls the meeting to order at 6 p.m. and asks Councilman Pessina to lead the public in the Pledge of Allegiance.

(Pledge of Allegiance)

(Council Clerk Reads the Call of the Meeting and Mayor declares call a legal call and meeting a legal meeting.)

The clerk reads the call of the meeting; the acting chair declares the call a legal call and the meeting a legal meeting.

Noted for the Record

Councilwoman Mary A. Bartolotta and Councilman Thomas J. Serra take their seats in the chamber at 6:04 p.m.

2. Questions to Directors Opens

The acting chair opens the questions to directors workshop and recognizes Councilwoman Kleckowski who asks to address questions to Guy Russo, Director of Water and Sewer. He comes forward. She asks for an update about Matabassett. Mr. Russo states it is a matter for the building committee and they have aegis over all the actions regarding this project. They are aware and working on this.

Councilman Giuliano requests the General Counsel; Attorney Brig Smith comes forward. Councilman Giuliano asks about resolution 13E, forming a building committee and that we are okay doing this before a plan is submitted. I don't think anything prevents us from doing this. Attorney Smith reviews the resolution. He states that is correct. Attorney Giuliano states so long as there is no prohibition, he is fine with it.

Councilwoman Bartolotta asks for the Chief of Police. Chief McKenna comes forward. She states at Finance and Government a question came up and that you are agreeable with Middletown Police and the ACO and the amount in the contract; will it be enough to cover the expenses. Chief McKenna responds it will cover it. We will do fine with this and it more than suffices.

Councilman Serra asks for the Fire Chief. Chief Kronenberger comes forward. Councilman Serra asks about the Deputy Fire Chief and job description and that you are removing things and it is going up in a pay grade. Chief Kronenberger states he doesn't want to go outside and would like to promote from within. They put in the Fire certifications #4 and we have a similar issue the police department had years ago where we have the Fire Marshall and bargaining unit individuals that far surpass the Deputy Fire Chief. Councilman Serra states that means overtime. Why not keep it there and have people move in. I don't think it is the right way to go to remove the bachelor's and to raise the pay to match overtime; this isn't about residency. This is to take care of overtime. Chief Kronenberger states this came up in the Police Department. Individuals make more than the Fire Chief due to overtime. Councilman Serra states that is exempt; five years ago we discussed this and came up with an agreement and the discrepancy is because the exempt individuals agreed to COLA and we know what has happened to that and this is going back to discussion and things will happen. So with that, I think the discrepancy will be taken care of. He dislikes taking out the Bachelor's degree. Chief Kronenberger states the requirements are almost the same for the Chief and Deputy. Councilman Serra states he takes over from you so he should match your requirements. Councilman Serra thanks him.

Councilwoman Bartolotta asks for Justin Carbonella, Youth Services. Councilwoman Bartolotta asks about the changes to the job description. Mr. Carbonella states they were looking at a number of things; the position is one of two others located within Youth Services Bureau and this is a programmatic one and the other is counseling. We were thinking of recruitment and struggled with the salary commensurate with the education. It required 5 years of experience and a Masters and was one pay grade higher than a secretary. It was to raise the salary or revise the salary. The best path way was to change the experience and education and changed it to Bachelors and four years. Councilman Bartolotta asks why it didn't go to Finance and Government. Mr. Carbonella responds his understanding was job descriptions go through General Counsel; Councilwoman Bartolotta states that is correct, but it also has a financial impact. Mr. Carbonella replies he has the money in his budget for this fiscal year. There is no impact on the budget and if approved today, the figures should be adjusted correctly. Councilwoman Bartolotta asks if he has the number for next year. Mr. Carbonella states he tried to do that at a Grade 8, step one it is \$19.63 and it is roughly a \$40,000 position.

Noted for the Record

Councilman Pessina takes his seat in the chamber at 6:16 p.m.

Councilman Serra asks to address questions to William Russo, Public Works Director. He states we are amending the Professional Services and is it apropos for your snow removal. Mr. Russo states from his conversations with everyone involved, it has returned to its former language. Councilman Serra states what we are adopting tonight is to the interpretation as was before. Councilwoman Bartolotta states the phrasing is not going back to the original phrasing, it is practicable so when possible, you will go out to bid. It is different from the original. Your interpretation, this is in the middle; we want to see bidding when practicable but it is not as stringent as it was when it changed.

Councilman Serra states it means it is back to where it was. Attorney Smith responds it is back to being flexible again and it gives the Council what it needs. Councilman Giuliano states wouldn't the change require a good faith effort. There has to be a good effort to get them. Attorney Smith responds it is not best effort; it is always possible to get three quotes and doesn't mean that. Councilman Giuliano states no they would demonstrate why it was not practicable to get three.

Councilman Chisem asks for Human Relations Director, Faith Jackson. Faith Jackson comes forward and responds to questions regarding the hiring report. Ms Jackson discusses vacancies and hiring; there is a lot of internal movement before there is external hiring. Most jobs are filled internally and it is important to have diversity to promote up through the workforce. When you only hire three people and they are filled by individuals in a protected class, we are still meeting our goals. If we had 15 positions available for hire, she would expect more diversity. We have demonstrated a good faith effort.

Councilman Nocera has questions for the Board of Education Chair, Mr. Loffredo. He asks for a status report regarding the proposed committee and the reason behind it. Chairman Loffredo states he served as chair of the Facilities Committee; at the end of the day, they recognized that Keigwin school that has not been looked at for 40 years needed review and renovation and as we looked at the makeup of the school system and the Middle School which was renovated and used as a high school, it made sense if they were going to combine the schools if looking at that site and they would be better served with that application. The city had completed the building of a new high school and the potential availability of bonding capability, all those factors in place, that the committee be staffed to move forward.

Councilman Pessina for the Chair of the Board, states you mentioned 6, 7, 8 - was there any discussion to put 5-6 and 7-8 and it might be less of an impact in the other schools. Chair Loffredo states the allocation of the schools, the north end of town has space in buildings, but in the south end of town, they are over filled. The availability of space; they are looking at redistricting to make sure schools are appropriately diversified. The student populations are decreasing and it makes sense to leave the buildings as k-5.

3. Questions to Directors Closes.

The acting chair, seeing no other members of the Council wishing to address questions to directors, closes the workshop.

Councilman Serra states to the Council, if you look at your agendas, the numbers are incorrect and you will have to correct them. It is correct on iLegislate

4. Meeting adjourned.

Councilman Serra moves to adjourn and is seconded by Councilman Pessina; the Acting Chair calls for the vote and it is unanimous to approve with eleven aye votes. The Acting Chair adjourns the meeting at 6:29 p.m.

ATTEST:

MARIE O. NORWOOD
COMMON COUNCIL CLERK